1. (Currently amended) A method of conducting an electronic online auction on behalf of a buyer, wherein the auction is between a plurality of potential bidders, the plurality of potential bidders competing for to supply a lot having at least one product to the buyer, comprising the steps of:

(a) receiving first bid information for a lot from a first bidder, said received first bid information representing a first bid that is originally defined in a context of said first bidder;

(b) storing information reflective of said submitted first bid, said stored information enabling a relative comparison of submitted bids, including said first bid, on a common competitive basis; and

(c) transmitting second bid information defined in a context of a second bidder that is different than said context of said first bidder to said second bidder, said transmitted second bid information enabling said second bidder to view said first bid originally defined in said context of said first bidder in said context of said second bidder;

wherein steps (a)-(c) are performed electronically by at least one computer during the electronic auction;

wherein the first bidder and the second bidder are different parties, and the buyer is different from the first bidder and the second bidder.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of (d) generating a transformed bid using said received first bid information, and wherein step (a) comprises the step of receiving untransformed bid information.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein step (d) comprises the step of performing a linear transformation having at least one of a multiplicative adjustment and an additive adjustment.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein step (d) comprises the step of multiplying a received bid price, specified in a local currency of said first bidder, with a pre-defined exchange rate to yield a base currency bid price.

5. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein step (d) comprises the step of transforming a received price per physical measure of weight or volume of coal into a standardized unit of value to the buyer of coal using multiplicative adjustments and additive adjustments based upon one or more of the thermal content, percentage sulfur, percentage ash, percentage water, and hardness of coal of said first bidder.

6. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein step (d) comprises the step of performing a non-linear transformation.

7. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein step (d) comprises the step of transforming received bid information using a lookup table.

8. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein step (d) comprises the step of performing a combination of linear, non-linear, and lookup table transformations simultaneously.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein step (a) comprises the step of receiving transformed bid information.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein step (a) comprises the step of receiving a bid price in a base currency, wherein said bid price is originally defined in a local currency of said first bidder.

11. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein step (b) further comprises generating detransformed bid information, and wherein step (c) further comprises the step of transmitting said detransformed bid information to said second bidder.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein step (d) comprises the step of performing a linear transformation having at least one of a multiplicative adjustment and an additive adjustment.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein step (d) comprises the step of converting a base currency price into a bid price in a local currency of said second bidder using a pre-defined exchange rate.

14. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein step (d) comprises the step of converting a received bid price specified in a local currency of said first bidder into a local currency of said second bidder using a pre-defined exchange rate.

15. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein step (d) comprises the step of transforming a received price per physical measure of weight or volume of coal into a standardized unit of value to the buyer of coal using multiplicative adjustments and additive adjustments based upon one or more of the thermal content, percentage sulfur, percentage ash, percentage water, and hardness of coal of said first bidder.

16. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein step (d) comprises the step of performing a non-linear transformation.

17. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein step (d) comprises the step of performing a transformation using a lookup table.

18. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein step (d) comprises the step of performing a combination of linear, non-linear, and lookup table transformations simultaneously.

19. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein step (c) comprises the step of transmitting second bid information to be transformed by said second bidder.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19, wherein step (c) comprises the step of transmitting a base currency price to be transformed by said second bidder into a local currency of said second bidder.

21. (Currently amended) A system for conducting an electronic online auction on behalf of a buyer, wherein the auction is between a plurality of potential bidders, the plurality of potential bidders competing forto supply a lot having at least one product to the buyer, comprising:

means for receiving first bid information for a lot from a first bidder, said received first bid information representing a first bid that is originally defined in a context of said first bidder;

means for storing information reflective of said submitted first bid, said stored information enabling a relative comparison of submitted bids including said first bid on a common competitive basis; and

means for transmitting second bid information defined in a context of a second bidder that is different than said context of said first bidder to said second bidder, said transmitted second bid information enabling said second bidder to view said first bid originally defined in said context of said first bidder in said context of said second bidder

wherein the first bidder and the second bidder are different parties, and the buyer is different from the first bidder and the second bidder.

22. (Original) The system of claim 21, further comprising means for generating a transformed bid using said received first bid information, and wherein said received first bid information is untransformed bid information.

23. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein said means for generating performs a linear transformation using at least one of a multiplicative adjustment and an additive adjustment.

24. (Original) The system of claim 23, wherein said means for generating multiplies a received bid price, specified in a local currency of said first bidder, with a pre-defined exchange rate to yield a base currency bid price.

25. (Original) The system of claim 23, wherein said means for generating transforms a received price per physical measure of weight or volume of coal into a standardized unit of value to the buyer of coal using multiplicative adjustments and additive adjustments based upon one or more of the thermal content, percentage sulfur, percentage ash, percentage water, and hardness of coal of said first bidder.

26. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein said means for generating performs a non-linear transformation.

27. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein said means for generating transforms received bid information using a lookup table.

28. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein said means for generating performs a combination of linear, non-linear, and lookup table transformations simultaneously.

29. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein said received first bid information is transformed bid information.

30. (Original) The system of claim 29, wherein said received first bid information is a bid price in a base currency, wherein said bid price is originally defined in a local currency of said first bidder.

31. (Previously presented) The system of claim 29, further comprising means for generating detransformed bid information, wherein said transmitted second bid information comprises detransformed bid information.

32. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein said means for generating performs a linear transformation using at least one of a multiplicative adjustment and an additive adjustment.

33. (Original) The system of claim 32, wherein said means for generating converts a base currency price into a bid price in a local currency of said second bidder using a pre-defined exchange rate.

34. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein said means for generating converts a received bid price specified in a local currency of said first bidder into a local currency of said second bidder using a pre-defined exchange rate.

35. (Original) The system of claim 32, wherein said means for generating transforms a received price per physical measure of weight or volume of coal into a standardized unit of value to the buyer of coal using multiplicative adjustments and additive adjustments based upon one or more of the thermal content, percentage sulfur, percentage ash, percentage water, and hardness of coal of said first bidder.

36. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein said means for generating performs a non-linear transformation.

37. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein said means for generating performs a transformation using a lookup table.

38. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein said means for generating performs a combination of linear, non-linear, and lookup table transformations simultaneously.

39. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein said transmitted second bid information is to be transformed by said second bidder.

40. (Original) The system of claim 39, wherein said transmitted second bid information is a base currency price to be transformed by said second bidder into a local currency of said second bidder.

41-73 (Cancelled).

74. (Currently amended) A computer program product for enabling a processor in a computer system to process bidding information in an auction conducted on behalf of a buyer, wherein the auction is between a plurality of bidders competing to supply a lot having at least one product to the buyer, said computer program product comprising:

a computer readable medium having a computer readable program code embodied in said medium for causing an application program to execute on the computer system, said computer readable program code comprising

a first computer readable program code to receive first bid information for athe lot having at least one product from a first bidder, said received first bid information representing a first bid that is originally defined in a context of said first bidder;

a second computer readable program code to store information reflective of said submitted first bid, said stored information enabling a relative comparison of submitted bids including said first bid on a common competitive basis; and

a third computer readable program code for to transmit second bid information defined in a context of a second bidder that is different than said context of said first bidder to said second bidder, said transmitted second bid information enabling said second bidder to view said first bid originally defined in said context of said first bidder in said context of said second bidder;

wherein the first bidder and the second bidder are different parties, and the buyer is different from the first bidder and the second bidder.

Claim 75 (Canceled).